

gists, however, consider it a dyscrastic affection, depending entirely upon the formation and subsequent changes of the peculiar substance called "typhus mater," similar in nature to medullary-sarcoma.—*Wilde's Austria*.

35. *Engorgement of the Uterus*.—In a pamphlet published by Dr. CLEMENT OLLIVIER, of Angers, on the treatment of prolapsus uteri, he speaks strongly against the use of differently shaped pessaries, which are employed indiscriminately, without paying attention to the cause of the prolapsus, which, according to Dr. Ollivier, is nothing more than an engorgement. Thence arise the symptoms which are constantly observed, and which are attributed to any cause other than the presence of a foreign body, and its contact with a painful and inflamed surface.

M. Ollivier considers that one of the most frequent causes of this affection in young girls, with whom it is very rare, is masturbation. He says, that one of the most frequent causes of chronic engorgement of the uterus in virgins, or women who do not have any communication with men, is masturbation, which, by gradually inducing disorder in the uterine functions, gives rise at first to spasm of the organ, which affects the secretion of the menstrua; on the other hand, this excitement, if frequently repeated, finally brings on a more or less intense sanguineous congestion, which gives rise to a kind of impermeability of the uterine parenchyma, caused by a slight inflammatory affection; then the dysmenorrhœa, at a later period, becoming habitual, induces amenorrhœa, which ultimately determines more dangerous diseases. Sterility is always an inevitable result, unless the diseased state of the uterus being arrested, allows those portions of the viscus which continue healthy to perform their functions; the catamenia may then reappear, but are almost always accompanied by uterine colics; the matrix may recover its powers of conception, but during gestation a period arrives when the uterus, not being able to enlarge freely, on account of the inflammatory action it has undergone before conception, reacts upon the product it contains, and almost always determines an abortion; in this way the pregnancies of women affected with morbid conditions of the uterus almost always terminate.

Masturbation, in causing a disordered condition of the entire uterus, produces more frequently an engorgement of the body of the organ rather than of the neck, whilst an exactly contrary condition obtains in women who have connection with men. In virgins the affection of the body of the uterus is more frequently found, that of the cervix uteri more rarely.

M. Ollivier mentions, among other causes of engorgement of the uterus, the irritation of the sexual organs by primary connection, a cause of irritation of the organ the more dangerous, that it has hitherto escaped the notice of medical men, either because they do not attach sufficient importance to it, or because women conceal from them the knowledge of their illness, notwithstanding the sufferings they endure.

The dysmenorrhœa, which almost always follows abortions, is the result of an inflammatory engorgement more or less considerable, and susceptible of cure; this engorgement is the cause of the sterility that follows miscarriages. The frequency of these inflammatory engorgements observed by the vulgar has rendered abortions more dangerous in their eyes than a delivery at the full period; when they take place during the first pregnancy, they are the more frequently to be attributed to a too great sensibility of the uterus, as yet unaccustomed to the sensations produced by coition. It is this sensibility which gives rise to consecutive inflammatory symptoms; under other circumstances this uterine sensibility causes the disorders which precede menstruation.

M. Ollivier attributes the sterility which occurs to most women in large towns, after their first and second labours, to a similar cause. The editors of the *Journal de Médecine et de Chirurgie Pratiques* observe, with respect to this opinion, that they agree with M. Ollivier, that the engorgement of the uterus may sometimes prevent conception, but that another cause for this pretended sterility in great towns, and Paris especially, must be sought for. Considerations of a different kind will explain the small number of children found in fami-

lies, whose pecuniary means are not in just relation with their daily expenses.—*Prov. Med. Journ.* Nov. 19, 1842.

## SURGICAL PATHOLOGY AND THERAPEUTICS AND OPERATIVE SURGERY.

36. *Researches on the Decomposition and Disintegration of Phosphatic Vesical Calculi; and on the introduction of Chemical Decomponents into the living bladder.* By S. ELLIOTT HOSKINS.—The object of these researches was the discovery of some chemical agent, more energetic in its action on certain varieties of human calculi, and less irritating when injected into the bladder, than any of the fluids hitherto employed.

These indications not being fulfilled by dilute acids, or other solvents which act by the exertion of single elective affinity, the author investigated the effects of complex affinity in producing decomposition, and consequent disintegration of vesical calculi.

For this purpose an agent is required, the base of which should unite with the acid of the calculus, whilst the acid of the former should combine and form soluble salts with the base of the latter. The combined acids would thereby be set free in definite proportions, to be neutralized in their nascent state, and removed out of the sphere of action, before any stimulating effect could be executed on the animal tissue. These intentions the author considers as having been fulfilled by the employment of weak solutions of some of the vegetable super-salts of lead; such as the super-malate, saccharate, lactate, &c. The preparation, however, to which he gives the preference, is an acid-saccharate, or, as he calls it, a *nitro-saccharate of lead*.

This salt, whichever it may be, must be moistened with a few drops of acetic, or of its own proper acid, previous to solution in water, whereby alone, perfect transparency and activity are secured. He further states, that the decomposing liquid should not exceed in strength one grain of the salt to each fluidounce of water, as the decomposing effect is in an inverse ratio to its strength.

Having by experiments, which are fully detailed, ascertained the chemical effects of the above class of decomponents on calculous conerctions *out of* the body, the author briefly alludes to the cases of three patients, in each of whom from four to eight ounces of these solutions had been repeatedly, for weeks together, introduced into the bladder, and retained in that organ without inconvenience, for the space of from 10 to 50 minutes.—*Proceedings of the Royal Society*, No. 56.

37. *Nitric Acid in Hemorrhoids.*—Dr. HOUSTON has published an interesting communication in the March number of the *Dublin Journal of Medical Science*, in which he points out the peculiar forms of hemorrhoidal affections, to which he conceives the use of nitric acid as an escharotic is especially applicable. The external hemorrhoid, an offset from the dilated veins about the lower part of the rectum and anus, admitting, during the early period of its existence, of the ready ingress and egress of blood from those vessels, and afterwards being found as a shut sac, lined with a fine serous membrane, analogous to that forming the inner coats of the veins, and containing a small clot of blood, or else consisting of permanent tumours of greater or less magnitude, and of complex cellular texture, which, by forming adhesions to the mucous membrane or skin, and bursting there under circumstances of congestion, and also by becoming occasionally the seat of acute inflammation, may produce all the inconveniences of a "fit of the piles," and must be regarded, as long as they continue to swell and bleed, as remaining in communication with the deeper varices from which they originally sprung, admits of removal by cutting instruments, although such operation may be attended with considerable and even profuse hemorrhage, controllable, however, by the ligature, styptics, or actual cautery. Accordingly, excision or